

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Office Action discusses a search report and states that references cited in the search report have not been considered. Office Action, p. 2. Applicant respectfully notes that a search report has not been submitted in an Information Disclosure Statement. Rather, the Form 1449 submitted with Applicant's Information Disclosure Statement of November 26, 2003 included Japanese references with translation documents. The Form 1449 was attached to the present Office Action and signed by the Examiner on January 17, 2007. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that the comments with respect to the search report are moot.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claim 7 stands objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. While Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 7 was in proper dependent form, to expedite prosecution Claim 7 has been amended according to the Examiner's suggestion. Claim 7 depends from Claim 4. Claim 4 recites a display control device comprising a first memory, a second memory, a third memory, and a controller. Claim 7 recites a game machine including the display control device according to Claim 4. As such, Claim 7 is

in proper dependent form. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Okada et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0155891). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a display control method comprising displaying a no win state display image, a reach-state display image and a win display image on a display portion of a game machine according to a predetermined production pattern in accordance with a result of a lot drawing by the game machine. Displaying the reach-state display image includes displaying a first advertising image and a first numeral image each corresponding to a reach-state of the game machine. The first advertising image and the first numeral image are displayed separately at different locations on the display portion of the game machine. Displaying the win display image includes displaying a second advertising image and a second numeral image each corresponding to a win state of the game machine. The second advertising image and the second numeral image are displayed separately at different locations on the display portion of the game machine. Displaying the no win state display image includes displaying a third numeral image without displaying the advertising images. The third numeral image corresponds to a no win state of the game machine. The advertising images are displayed on the display portion according to the production pattern when at least one of the reach-state display image and the win display image is displayed.

Okada fails to teach or suggest the display control method recited by Claim 1. In Okada advertisement information is displayed as part of the game display elements. Okada, para. [0112] to [0113] and Fig. 10. For example, in Fig. 10(b), three drums are displayed and the advertisement information pieces 13a to 13c are displayed *on the rotatable drums*. Okada, para. [0114]. In this way, Okada is distinguishable from the display control method of claim 1, which recites that the first and second advertising images are displayed separate from the first and second numeral images, at different locations on the display portion of the game machine. Okada, which incorporates the advertisement information pieces into the game display elements, fails to teach or suggest the separate display of numerals and advertisement images recited by claim 1.

Okada also fails to teach or suggest displaying a first advertising image and a first numeral image, each corresponding to a reach-state of the game machine or displaying a second advertising image and a second numeral image, each corresponding to a win state of a game machine, as recited by claim 1. In Okada, insofar as the advertising images are incorporated into the game display elements, the same advertising images are displayed regardless of the game machine state, whereas in the method recited by claim 1, the first and second advertising images are displayed and correspond with either a reach-state or a win state of the game machine. The display control method of claim 1 also recites that a no win state display image is displayed and includes a third numeral image without the advertising images. Okada is silent with respect to displaying a no win state display image, without advertising images.

The utility and novelty of displaying the first and second advertising images corresponding to a reach-state and a win state of the game machine is supported by the Specification, including para [0049]. For example, “since the result of the lot drawing corresponds to the advertising image Gc ... the player can forecast that a winning state may be generated at a high probability by the display of an advertising image Gc corresponding to the reach-state so that it is possible for the player to notice the advertising image Gc sufficiently and securely.” Specification, para. [0049]. In this way, advertising images are displayed without causing discomfort to a player and the effectiveness of the advertising is increased. Specification, para. [0048].

For at least these reasons, Okada fails to teach or suggest the display control method recited by claim 1. With regard to claims 2-3, Applicant notes that each depends from claim 1, which defines over the prior art as discussed above. Therefore, claims 2-3 also define over the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claim 4 recites a display control device comprising a first memory for storing production pattern data concerning a production pattern of a display image, a second memory for storing display image data concerning the display image, and a third memory for storing advertising image data concerning advertising images. The display control device also comprises a controller for reading from the first memory production pattern data predetermined in accordance with a result of a lot drawing by a main controller for a game machine, reading the display image data from the second memory according to the production pattern defined by the production pattern data, and displaying a no win display image, a reach-state display image and a win display image

on a display device for the game machine based on the display image data. The controller displays the advertising images on the display device for the game machine, the advertising images being contained in the display image based on the advertising image data read from the third memory section according to the production pattern when at least one of the group consisting of the reach-state display image and the win display image is displayed. The reach-state display image includes a first advertising image from the advertising images and a first numeral image each corresponding to a reach-state of the game machine, the first advertising image and the first numeral image being displayed separately at different locations on the display device. The win display image includes a second advertising image from the advertising images and a second numeral image each corresponding to a win state of the game machine, the second advertising image and the second numeral image being displayed separately at different locations on the display device. The no win display image includes a third numeral image without the advertising images, the no win image corresponding to a no win state of the game machine.

Similar limitations are discussed above with respect to claim 1. For at least the above reasons, Okada fails to teach or suggest the display control device recited by claim 4. With regard to claims 5-7, Applicant notes that each depends from claim 4, which defines over the prior art as discussed above. Therefore, claims 5-7 also defines over the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okada et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0155891) in view of Inoue (U.S. Pat. No. 5,752,881). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

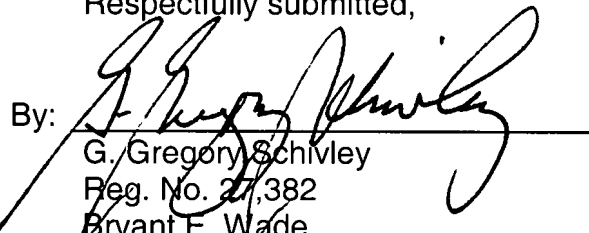
Applicant notes that claim 8 depends from claim 4, which defines over the prior art as discussed above. For at least the above reasons, claim 8 also defines over the prior art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

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Respectfully submitted,

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